

**CITY OF MIAMI BEACH**  
**Office of the City Manager**  
**Letter to Commission No. 086-2005**



**To:** Mayor David Dermer and  
Members of the City Commission

**Date:** March 24, 2005

**From:** Jorge M. Gonzalez  
City Manager

**Subject: FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION LEGISLATION**

Attached, please find correspondence from the City's Washington Lobbyists regarding the status of the reauthorization of TEA 21, the multi-year authorizing bill for the nation's transportation infrastructure.

Included within the House version of the legislation are the following projects with the corresponding funding recommendations.

\$3.5 million for the Atlantic Corridor Greenway Network  
\$1 million for the West Avenue Bridge

Please contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.

~~JMG~~ JMG:HKC

c: Executive Staff  
Fred Beckmann, Public Works Director  
Kevin Crowder, Economic Development Division Director

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March 23, 2005

## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO: HONORABLE DAVID DERMER, MAYOR**  
**MEMBERS OF THE MIAMI BEACH CITY COMMISSION**

**THROUGH: JORGE GONZALEZ, CITY MANAGER**  
**KEVIN CROWDER, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**

**FROM: MARILYN BERRY THOMPSON**  
**F. MARION TURNER**

**SUBJECT: Congress Passes Transportation Reauthorization Legislation**  
**- City Projects Included**

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Over the past two weeks, the Senate and the House of Representatives have each passed their respective versions of legislation to reauthorize TEA 21, the multi-year authorizing bill for the nation's transportation infrastructure.

Included within the House version of the legislation were a number of city-requested projects. Listings within the legislation included:

**\$3.5 million** for the Atlantic Corridor Greenway Network; and  
**\$1 million** for the West Avenue Bridge.

### ***House Bill Highlights***

The House legislation, H.R. 3, the *Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (TEA LU)* reauthorizes the federal highway, public transportation, highway safety, and motor carrier safety programs for six years, from fiscal years 2004 through 2009. The bill also retains the specific policy features and programs of its predecessor, TEA 21.

The bill provides a total of **\$283.9 billion** in guaranteed funding – a 42 percent increase over the guaranteed funding for TEA 21 (1998-2003). Furthermore, this funding level has been formally endorsed by the Administration, with the Department of

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Transportation's updated reauthorization proposal, submitted with the fiscal year 2006 Budget, supporting a 6-year reauthorization at a level of \$283.9 billion. The overall level of transit funding is **\$52.3 billion** a substantial increase over TEA 21 levels but certainly less than the transit supporters had hoped for.

Finally, in a compromise to donor states, the bill also guarantees a 92.5% return of each state's gas tax contributions. While less than the 95% return the donor states wanted, it represents a 2% increase from TEA 21's 90.5% "minimum guarantee."

### ***Senate Bill Highlights***

At present the two of the four committees that have jurisdiction over yet un-numbered Senate Bill have conducted markups. The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, which controls the highway title, and Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee, which oversees the transit title, have reported their sections, while the Finance Committee (tax) and Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee (safety title), have yet to hold markup sessions.

While still technically incomplete, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act of 2005 (SAFETEA), when completed, will provide **\$283.9 billion** in guaranteed funding from FY 2004-2009. The Senate bill, however, only provides **\$51.6 billion** for transit.

### ***Comparison Of Guaranteed Funding Totals By Agency*** (in millions)

<b>AGENCY</b>	<b>TEA 21</b>	<b>TEA LU</b>	<b>SAFETEA</b>
Federal Highway Admin.	\$163,000	\$225,500	\$227,000
Federal Transit Admin.	\$36,000	\$52,350	\$51,600
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Admin.	\$1,300	\$2,920	n/a
National Highway Traffic Safety Admin.	\$1,700	\$3,220	n/a
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>\$202,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$283,990</u></b>	<b><u>\$283,990</u></b> (Projected)

### ***Next Steps:***

The immediate next steps are for the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee (they have jurisdiction over the Highway Safety title) and Finance Committee (tax title) to conduct markups of each respective section. Both committees have indicated they will hold these markups in early April. Barring any setbacks in these committees, Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist has tentatively scheduled floor time for the bill during last two weeks of April.

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Once the bill makes it to the floor, debate will be long and contentious. Many Republican and Democratic Senators feel that the \$284 billion overall funding level is inadequate, and there are a number of amendments planned to increase that number. If Senator Frist determines that the votes are there to pass one of these amendments, he may decide to delay floor consideration to prevent an embarrassing situation for the administration and the leadership, which has promised to keep the bill at the agreed upon \$284 billion level.

Once they pass a bill on the Senate floor, then the really difficult work of a House/Senate Conference begins. This is when the real donor/donee state fight will begin, as well as a fight over the House's desire to change the NEPA (environmental permitting) process to make it easier for road projects to sidestep environmental roadblocks.

What all this means is that there are many steps remaining before this bill becomes law. As a result, I am quietly hearing from staff involved in the process that they expect another extension to be passed before Memorial Day that will probably take the existing authority through Sept. 30th. The House and Senate will then take the summer and the august recess to negotiate a final bill and wrap it up in September.

Senate projects could be added when the bill gets to the floor, but it's more likely that a list will materialize sometime in the summer.

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